

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment and Response is responsive to the non-final Office action dated December 27, 2007, setting forth a shortened three-month statutory period for reply with a one-month extension of time expiring on March 27, 2008. This Amendment and Response is submitted on April 25, 2008; thus, a petition and fee for a one-month extension of time accompanies this Amendment and Response.

The Assignee thanks the Examiner for reviewing this application and issuing an Office action.

Prior to entry of this Amendment, claims 1-22 are pending in the application, with claim 1 being an independent claim. By this Amendment, claims 4, 15 and 17 are amended, claims 1-3, 7-14 and 18 are canceled, without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein, and claim 35 is added. Accordingly, after entry of this Amendment, claims 4-6, 15-17, 19-22 and 35 will be pending, with claims 4, 15 and 17 being independent claims.

The Assignee gratefully acknowledges the indication that claims 4-6, 15, 17 and 19-22 include allowable subject matter. Claims 4, 15 and 17 are amended to be in independent form and to include all of the features of the respective base claim and any intervening claims. Although claim 4 is further amended to delete the modifier "downward," the Assignee believes that its patentability is not affected. Further, as claim 16 and new claim 35 depend from allowable claims, the Assignee respectfully submits that pending claims 4-6, 15-17, 19-22 and 35 are allowable.

I. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office action rejects claims 1-3, 10-14, and 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,645,124 to Clem. This rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of claims 1-3, 10-14, and 18. The Assignee respectfully notes that claim 16 appears to be inadvertently included in this rejection, as claim 16 depends from claim 15, which is indicated as containing allowable subject matter, as noted above.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Office action rejects claims 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Clem in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,993,358 to Gureghian et al. This rejection is moot in view of the cancellation of claims 7-9.

III. Conclusion

In accordance with the amendments and remarks set forth herein, the Assignee respectfully submits the application and all claims are in a condition for allowance, and requests such prompt allowance.

A petition for a one-month extension of time accompanies this Amendment and Response. Accordingly, please charge Deposit Account number 04-1415 in the amount of \$120.00 for the one-month extension of time fee. The Assignee believes no further fees or petitions are due with this filing. However, should any such fees or petitions be required, please consider this as authorization therefor and please charge such fees to Deposit Account number 04-1415.

Should any issues remain that the Examiner believes may be dealt with in a telephone conference, he is invited to contact the undersigned at 303-629-3400.

Respectfully submitted,

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